



SUMMARY

Joshua is a story of conquest and fulfillment for the people of God. After many years of slavery in Egypt and 40 years in the desert, the Israelites were finally allowed to enter the land promised to their fathers. Abraham, always a migrant, never possessed the country to which he was sent, but he left to his children the legacy of God's covenant that made them the eventual heirs of all of Canaan (see Ge. 15:13,16,18; 17:8). Joshua was destined to turn that promise into reality.

Where Deuteronomy ends, the book of Joshua begins: The tribes of Israel are still camped on the east side of the Jordan River. The narrative opens with God's command to move forward and pass through the river on dry land. Then it relates the series of victories in central, southern, and northern Canaan that gave the Israelites control of all the hill country and the Negev. It continues with a description of the tribal allotments and ends with Joshua's final addresses to the people. The theme of the book, therefore, is the establishment of God's people Israel in the Lord's land, the land He had promised to give them as their place of "rest" in the earth (1:13,15; 21:44; 22:4; 23:1; see also Dt. 3:20; 12:9–10; 25:19; 1Ki. 5:4; 8:56). So the Great King's promise to the patriarchs and Moses to give the land of Canaan to the chosen people of His kingdom is now historically fulfilled (1:1–6; 21:43–45). ~ *NIV Study Bible, Introduction to Joshua*

DATE OF WRITING: In the days of Joshua, or shortly after. Notice the use of the word "us" (5:6) and the phrase "to this day" (4:9; 5:9; 6:25; 7:26; 8:28, 29; 9:27; 10:27; 13:13; 14:14; 15:63; 16:10).

AUTHOR: Joshua (24:26)

GENERAL OUTLINE

- Chapters 1-5 - Preparation for Canaan
- Chapters 5-12 - Conquest of Canaan
- Chapters 13-21 - Distribution of Canaan among 12 tribes
- Chapters 22-24 - Joshua's review of Israel's covenant obligations

DETAILED OUTLINE

- 1:1-9 – The LORD's commissioning of Joshua
- 1:10-18 – Joshua's commissioning of the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh

- Chapter 2 – The spies encounter Rahab’s faith at Jericho
- Chapters 3-4 – The LORD brings the Israelites across the Jordan River
- 5:1-12 – Israel’s renewal of their commitment to the LORD
- 5:13-6:27 – The LORD defeats Jericho
- Chapter 7 – Achan’s devastating sin
- Chapter 8 – The LORD defeats Ai
- Chapter 9 – Israel tricked by the Gibeonites
- Chapters 10-11 – The LORD defeats the Canaanite Coalition
- Chapters 12-21 – The Israelites conquer and distribute the land
- Chapter 22 – A misunderstanding among the Israelites
- Chapters 23-24 – Joshua recounts the LORD’s faithfulness and challenges the Israelites to remain faithful to the LORD

JOSHUA THE MAN

- His name was Hoshea, but Moses changed it to Joshua (Numbers 13:8, 16)
- Joshua was a soldier under Moses’ command (Exodus 17:9-14)
- He was an assistant to Moses (Exodus 24:13; 33:11; Numbers 11:28)
- He was one of the spies sent by Moses into the Promised Land (Numbers 13:16; 14:6)
- He was chosen to lead the people in Moses’ place (Numbers 27:12-23; Deuteronomy 31:3, 7)
- He was authorized to apportion the Promised Land to the tribes (Numbers 34:17)
- He was fully equipped by the Holy Spirit to lead (Deuteronomy 34:9)
- He was commissioned by God to take the land (Deuteronomy 31:14, 23; Joshua 1:1-9)
- God promised to be with Joshua as He was with Moses (Joshua 3:7)
- He was known as the “servant of the LORD” when he died, at the age of 110 (Joshua 24:29; Judges 2:8)

KEY THEMES IN JOSHUA

- LAND - 1:1-6; 24:13
 - God fulfilled His promise to Abraham (Genesis 12:3; 13:15, 17; 15:7, 18; 17:1-8)
 - God gave the Israelites rest (11:23; 14:15; 21:43-44; 23:1)
 - There is an eternal rest yet to come (Hebrews 4:8-11)
- LAW – 1:7-8; 8:34-35; 22:5; 23:6
 - Obedience to God’s Law promises success (1:7-8)
- LEADERSHIP
 - Transition from Moses to Joshua (1:1-2, 5)
 - God exalted Joshua in the eyes of the people as He did with Moses (3:7; 4:14; 6:27)
 - God was with Joshua as He was with Moses; parallels:
 - Joshua: crossing of Jordan (4:23) / Moses: crossing of the Red Sea (4:23)
 - Joshua: The LORD revealed Himself as the captain of the host of the LORD (5:13-15) / Moses: The LORD revealed Himself through the burning bush (Exodus 3:1-6)

- Joshua: Held his javelin in the air and the Israelite army defeated Ai (8:18-26) / Moses: Held his hands up as the Israelites defeated the Amalekites (Exodus 17:8-13)
- LOVE - 23:6-8, 11-16; 24:14-27
 - Love the LORD alone, not the Canaanite gods
- LOYALTY
 - The LORD was loyal to fight for Israel (6:2; 10:8, 14, 19, 30, 32, 42; 11:6, 8; 13:6; 23:3; 24:11-12, 18)
 - The LORD keeps His promises (21:43-45; 23:14)

CONTENT FROM JOSHUA MENTIONED IN NEW TESTAMENT

- Acts 7:45; 13:19
- Hebrews 4:8; 11:30-31
- James 2:25

PECULIARITIES IN JOSHUA

- *Holy War*
 - God's command to "utterly destroy" the Canaanites (6:21; 8:26; 10:1, 28, 35, 37, 39, 40; 11:11-12, 20-21)
 - Why?
 - Judgment on the Canaanites for their wickedness (Genesis 15:16; Leviticus 18:25; Deuteronomy 9:4-5; 12:29-31)
 - Protection of the Israelites from wickedness (Exodus 23:33; 34:11-17; Leviticus 18:1-5, 24-30; 20:1-8; Deuteronomy 7:1-11; 18:9-13; 20:16-18; Joshua 23:12-13)
- *Miracles*
 - Crossing the Jordan River at flood stage on dry ground (3:13-17)
 - Walls of Jericho collapsing (6:20)
 - The LORD sent large hail stones to defeat the enemy army (10:11)
 - The LORD made the sun stand still for about a day (10:12-14)
- *The Hornet*
 - Exodus 23:27-30; Deuteronomy 2:25; 7:20-24; Joshua 2:9-11; 24:12
 - "God's miraculous intervention on His people's behalf in dispossessing the indigenous inhabitants of the Promised Land." ("Hornet" in *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, Revised* [ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley; 4 vols.; Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1979-1988], 2:757).
- *Christophany*
 - Possible appearance of the pre-incarnate Christ (5:13-15)

THEME AND MEMORY VERSES

1:5-9 “No man will *be able to* stand before you all the days of your life. Just as I have been with Moses, I will be with you; I will not fail you or forsake you. ⁶ Be strong and courageous, for you shall give this people possession of the land which I swore to their fathers to give them. ⁷ Only be strong and very courageous; be careful to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, so that you may have success wherever you go. ⁸ This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success. ⁹ Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous! Do not tremble or be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.”

2:11 “When we heard *it*, our hearts melted and no courage remained in any man any longer because of you; for the LORD your God, He is God in heaven above and on earth beneath.”

22:5 “Only be very careful to observe the commandment and the law which Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, to love the LORD your God and walk in all His ways and keep His commandments and hold fast to Him and serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul.”

21:45 “Not one of the good promises which the LORD had made to the house of Israel failed; all came to pass.”

24:15 “If it is disagreeable in your sight to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves today whom you will serve: whether the gods which your fathers served which were beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.”